



SLAM FEST — Madison Square Garden hosted the World Wrestling Federation's (WWF) Summer Slam '88 on Aug. 29, grossing \$418,721 at the gate. Warming up before the big event, from left: Ed Cohen, vice president arena booking, WWF; wrestler Jake (The Snake) Roberts; Nancy Moon, public relations manager, Madison Square Garden Corp.; and Michael Weber, director of media relations, WWF. (AB Photo)

WWF's Summer Slam '88 Brings In Full House At Madison Sq. Garden

By **CANDICE CARMEL**

NEW YORK — Wrestling fans turned out in full force for Summer Slam '88, a World Wrestling Federation (WWF) event held Aug. 29 at Madison Square Garden (MSG) here.

The show was a sellout, with 20,001 tickets disposed of three weeks before the

event. The Felt Forum was then opened for closed-circuit viewing, and an additional 4,623 tickets were sold.

"Overall, we had a total of about 25,000 people," said Michael Weber, WWF director of media relations. "Gross ticket sales were \$355,345 for the Garden

Continued on Page 13

WWF's Summer Slam '88 Brings In...

Continued from Page 1

(arena) and \$63,376 for the Felt Forum."

Tickets for the 10-match card sold for \$25, \$18, \$16, \$13 and \$11. Seats for closed-circuit viewing in the Felt Forum were \$15.

The three-hour wrestling event was also transmitted live via pay-per-view cable television. Weber estimated that between 500,000 and one million households of an available 11 million cable homes across the United States tuned in to the event. The suggested retail price for the cable hookup was \$14.95.

"This is a first for us in that it's the first time we've had a pay-per-view event in August," said Weber.

Pay-per-view figures stood at 880,000 as of Aug. 31, with reports from 25 percent of all systems, according to Jim Troy, senior vice president of pay-per-view operations for WWF.

"This figure so far is better than how we did on our Survivors Series, in which we had a seven percent national buy rate out of 590,000 homes, but not quite as good as Wrestlemania IV, where we got a nine percent buy rate out of 10.2 million homes.

"The strongest response areas in the country were Southern California; Chicago, Ill.; Detroit, Mich.; Washington, D.C., and Boston, Mass. In Newark, N.J., Gateway Cable alone had a 15 percent buy rate," said Troy.

Weber told AB that WWF had not played a major event at MSG since the original Wrestlemania in

March 1985.

"We play at all the premier arenas, and Madison Square Garden is located in a city that has the largest population base in the country at seven million. Our organization is based in this area, and other than monthly wrestling events, we hadn't done a major event in New York for a while, and we wanted a chance to come back."

The arena hopes to host more WWF events "of this magnitude and stature in the near future," said Steven D. Alper, president of MSG Enterprises. "(It) was a very exciting evening for us, and the staff had a great time hosting it."

Harry M. Stevens Inc. handled the food, beverage and merchandise concessions. AB talked with Dwight Berube, general manager, who said food and drink per caps were up 40 percent from regular wrestling events of the same length.

"Our souvenir sales were more than double that of normal wrestling shows, and an event T-shirt that was made for this show did especially well. Sales from these T-shirts were responsible for the increase in per capita merchandise sales," said Berube.

Among the novelty items sold were event programs, Hulk Hogan foam hands, teddy bears, posters, T-shirts and replicas of the championship belt.

WWF's next pay-per-view event will be the Survivor Series, to be held at Richfield (Ohio) Coliseum Nov. 24.